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KOHLI IS MASTER OF CEREMONY AT KOTLA

Delirious fans screamed in excitement at the mere mention of his name as Virat Kohli's unmatched aura dominated Ranji Trophy between Delhi & Railways. The DDCA opened the 6,000-capacity 'Gautam Gambhir Stand' first but sensing that the crowd situation could go out of hand, they openned the 11,000-capacity 'Bishan Singh Bedi Stand' | P17

67 KILLED in copter-jet mid-air crash

Rescuers look for survivors near the wreckage site in Potomac River near Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport in Virginia on Thursday | AP

AGENCIES

ALL 64 people aboard an American Airlines aircraft that collided with an Army helicopter were killed in the deadliest US air crash since 2001, President Donald Trump said on Thursday.

At least 28 bodies were pulled from the icy waters of the Potomac River after the mid-air collision on Wednesday night when the helicopter, a UH-60 Black Hawk based at Fort Belvoir in Virginia, flew in the path of the aircraft as it was preparing to land at the Ronald Reagan National Airport near Washington.

Dramatic audio from air traffic controllers showed them repeatedly asking the helicopter if it had the passenger jet "in sight", and then just before the crash telling it to "pass behind" the plane.

"We don't believe there are any survivors," John Donnelly, the fire chief in the nation's capital, said.

The plane was found upside-down in three sections of the Potomac in waist-deep water. The chopper was carrying three army soldiers, who are also believed to have died, officials confirmed.

In his remarks on the tragedy, Trump launched a broadside blaming diversity hires for the mid-air crash. "I put safety first. Obama, Biden and the Democrats put policy first," Trump said. "You say what was a helicopter doing in that track," he said.

Passengers on Wednesday's flight included a group of figure skaters, their coaches and family members returning from a development camp that followed the US Figure Skating Championships in Wichita. The two coaches were identified as Russian figure skaters Evgenia Shishkova and Vadim Naumov, who had won the pairs title at the 1994 world championships, and had competed twice in the Olympics. P12

Don't rush '1 poll' plan, says JD(U) at all-party meet

Stormy Parliament session to begin today

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

AT an all-party meeting convened by the BJP-led NDA government on the eve of the Budget session of Parliament, key ally Janata Dal (United) flagged its concerns over the Centre's ambitious 'One Nation, One Election' Bill, saying it should not be 'rushed through' since it required wider consultations.

The meeting was chaired by Union ministers Rajnath Singh, Kiren Rijiju, J P Nadda, Arjun Ram Meghwal, and L Murugan.

Significantly, the JD(U) led by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has always supported the idea of 'one-nation-one-election'. In its memorandum submitted to the high-level committee last year, it said simultaneous elections are important to strengthen the architecture of good governance. The JD(U) added that it will reduce the financial burden associated with the frequent elections, as campaigning, logistics and security measures would be consolidated.

The 'One Nation, One Election Bill' introduced during the Winter Session of Parliament, has been sent to a 39-member Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) for scrutiny.

Raising the issue at the meeting, JD(U) MP Sanjay Kumar Jha said the government shouldn't be in a hurry to implement the bill, which proposes simultaneous polls to Lok Sabha and state assemblies. It must hold wider consultations, said Jha.

Besides, NDA allies Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and JD (U) joined Congress' Gaurav Gogoi in questioning the seating arrangement in the Lok Sabha. The allies claimed it was decided without consulting the MPs.

During the last winter session of Parliament, TDP member Magunta Sreenivasulu Reddy had openly expressed unhappiness over his seat allocation.

RAPS NEW UGC RULES

Last week, the JD (U) had differed with the new UGC draft regulations saying it would limit the role of an elected state govt in the appointment of Vice Chancellors and also in the field of higher education

OPPN'S DEMANDS

The Opposition intends to corner the government on the proposed Waqf (Amend) Bill, the Maha Kumbh stampede, new UGC draft norms, the downward trend in the economy and other issues

IRDAI puts 10% cap on hike in premiums for senior citizens

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

IN a bid to protect senior citizens—the most vulnerable age group with limited income sources—from steep hikes in health insurance premiums, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) on Thursday capped the annual increase on such premiums at 10%.

In its order, the regulator said insurance firms must consult it before proposing any hike above 10%, adding that IRDAI must be also be informed in case of withdrawal of individual health insurance products offered to senior citizens. IRDAI's move comes in the wake of widespread complaints of arbitrary increase in premiums as well as rejection of claims by senior citizens.

The regulator took note of the fact that health insurance premium is dependent on claims outgo, which depends on the amount charged by hospitals for treatments.

AD-HOC

JUDGES TO CLEAR BACKLOG OF CASES

Considering a backlog of over 18 lakh criminal cases, the Supreme Court on Thursday allowed the high courts to appoint retired judges on ad-hoc basis for 2-3 yrs | P9

ED NAMES CM, WIFE, OFFICIALS IN MUDA SCAM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

CM Siddaramaiah, his wife BM Parvathy, brother-in-law Mallikarjun Swamy, land owner Devaraju and some top officials of MUDA have been named in the ED investigation into a Rs 56 crore land allotment scam.

The provisional attachment order (PAO) issued by the ED on January 17 for 142 sites, mostly belonging to real estate agents, indicts the CM and others as "public servants and private individuals, who colluded with dishonest intention and conspiracy to illegally obtain sites from MUDA in the guise of compensation for land acquisition by MUDA by representing false facts, forgery, cheating and use of undue influence".

The ED in September last year registered an Enforcement Case Information Report against Siddaramaiah, Parvathy and others in the MUDA case under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, based on an FIR by Lokayukta police. P4

EXPRESS INTAKE

Uni-GAUGE, COMEDK UGET on May 10 | P2

Vijayendra: No role in appointments | P4

Tough law to rein in lenders soon | P4

HDK: Won't privatise Vizag steel plant | P5

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EXPRESS VIEW

Kejriwal says CEC indulging in 'dirty politics' amid EC nudge

New Delhi: With EC expressing dissatisfaction with the response of Arvind Kejriwal to its notice over his claim that Haryana government was "mixing poison" in Yamuna, the AAP supremo accused Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar of getting indulged in "dirty politics" P9

Greater Bengaluru Integrated Satellite Town in Ramanagara

Bengaluru: In what could be termed a shot in the arm for DyCM DK Shivakumar, who also holds Bengaluru Development and Town Planning portfolio, the state cabinet on Thursday approved 'Greater Bengaluru Integrated Satellite Town' project in a cluster of 10 villages in Ramanagara district P2

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA

INVEST KARNATAKA

Shri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka

Shri D. K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka

Shaping the future of growth, together

Shri M. B. Patil
Hon'ble Minister for Large & Medium Industries and Infrastructure Development interacting with Shri Siddaramaiah, Hon'ble Chief Minister.

Join us at the Invest Karnataka 2025 Global Investors Meet, where global industry pioneers converge to reimagine a sustainable, inclusive, resilient and tech-driven future. Discover new opportunities, foster strategic partnerships, and be a part of Karnataka's transformative growth story.

Reimagining Growth

Invest Karnataka 2025 | Global Investors Meet | Bangalore Palace, Bengaluru | Feb 12-14

Inauguration on February 11, 4 PM

Register here

As enshrined in our Constitution, "to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievement" is the fundamental duty of every citizen of India.

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Principal Secretary to Government, Commerce and Industries Department, Government of Karnataka